



# Legislative Department Seattle City Council Memorandum

**Date:** October 11, 2011  
**To:** Committee on the Built Environment (COBE)  
**From:** Sara Belz, Central Staff Analyst  
**Subject:** **Council Bill (CB) 117271: Roosevelt Legislative Rezone**

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On October 12, 2011, COBE will have its third discussion on legislative rezone options for the Roosevelt Residential Urban Village. Department of Planning and Development (DPD) staff first briefed the Committee on the Executive's rezone proposal on August 10 and on September 19 COBE hosted a public hearing at Roosevelt High School.

## **Rezone Proposals**

To date, three major legislative rezone proposals have been developed for Roosevelt. The attached matrix and maps summarize and compare the key components of each proposal. As this rezone process moves forward, the Council may choose to adopt one of these three options, with or without amendments, or to develop its own rezone proposal.

### ***Option 1: State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Draft Proposal, April 2011***

This rezone option is similar to the proposal developed by the Roosevelt Neighborhood Association in 2006. It was released by the Executive in April 2011 as a draft proposal and served as the basis for DPD's SEPA analysis.

### ***Option 2: Executive's Proposal (CB 117271), June 2011***

After reviewing and considering comments on its April 2011 draft proposal (Option 1), the Executive published its official rezone recommendation for Roosevelt in June. The Executive's proposal includes many of the same rezone recommendations as Option 1, with two key exceptions:

	Option 1: SEPA Draft Proposal	Option 2: Executive's Proposal
1. Proposed zoning in the vicinity of NE 65 <sup>th</sup> Street and Roosevelt Way NE	Neighborhood Commercial 3 (NC3) with a 65 foot height limit	NC3 with height limits ranging from 65 to 85 feet
2. Proposed zoning between NE 65 <sup>th</sup> and 66 <sup>th</sup> Streets, and 12 <sup>th</sup> and 15 <sup>th</sup> Avenues NE ("the high school blocks")	Neighborhood Commercial 2 (NC2) with a 40 foot height limit	NC2 with a 65 foot height limit

CB 117271, which would implement the Executive's rezone proposal, was introduced in August 2011 and referred to COBE.

### ***Option 3: Sustainable, Livable Roosevelt Proposal, September 2011***

After reviewing and considering the Executive's proposal, the Roosevelt Neighborhood Association developed a third rezone option and titled it Sustainable, Livable Roosevelt. Their report, which was released in September 2011, recommends three departures from the Executive's proposal:

	Option 2: Executive's Proposal	Option 3: Sustainable, Livable Roosevelt Proposal
1. Proposed zoning in the vicinity of NE 65 <sup>th</sup> Street and Roosevelt Way NE	NC3 with height limits ranging from 65 to 85 feet	NC3 with height limits ranging from 65 to 85 feet  (Note: The boundaries of the area where 85 foot building heights would be permitted under Option 3 differ from those described under Option 2.)
2. Proposed zoning for the high school blocks.	NC2 with a 65 foot height limit	NC2 with a 40 foot height limit (same as Option 1)
3. Proposed zoning east of I-5 between NE 66 <sup>th</sup> and NE 68 <sup>th</sup> Streets	Lowrise 3 (same as Option 1)	Midrise

### **Other Land Use Tools**

In addition to the rezone options included in the three proposals described above, Councilmembers may choose to utilize other land use tools that could help guide future development in the Roosevelt Residential Urban Village. Summaries of several of these tools are provided below. Please note that they *are not* mutually exclusive.

1. Design review (No Council action needed)	<p><b>Description:</b> Design review is required for any new multifamily, commercial or industrial development project that exceeds certain size thresholds. Thresholds vary by zoning district but are generally defined by a minimum residential unit count and/or floor area measurement.</p> <p><b>Considerations:</b> If a legislative rezone within the Roosevelt Residential Urban Village is approved by the Council, most of the projects developed on the rezoned parcels will likely trigger design review. No additional Council action is needed to initiate the standard design review process in Roosevelt.</p>
2. Design guidelines	<p><b>Description:</b> Design guidelines are the primary tool used by the City's design review boards in their evaluations of proposed development projects. Design guidelines establish qualities of architecture, urban design, and public space that can help make a project a successful part of a community. Roosevelt is one of several neighborhoods located throughout the City that has its own set of design guidelines.</p> <p><b>Considerations:</b> Roosevelt's existing design guidelines date from 2000, before a Sound Transit light rail station was planned for the neighborhood and before Roosevelt High School underwent a major renovation or received historic landmark status. The Council could call on DPD to update Roosevelt's design guidelines to better address some of the changes that have come to the neighborhood in recent years and are likely to affect its development into the future. However, completing an update of Roosevelt's design guidelines could take</p>

	<p>several months. If revised prior to Council action on the legislative rezone, a rezone decision could be delayed until well into 2012. If revised following Council action, the influence of the updated design guidelines could be compromised by the ability of developers to submit permit applications and move forward with new construction projects on the rezoned parcels before the new guidelines are in place. Adopting any changes to Roosevelt’s design guidelines will require Council action via ordinance.</p>
<p>3. Specialized zoning amendment or Station Area Overlay District amendment</p>	<p><b>Description:</b> It is possible to add language to the Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) that applies special development standards to properties that meet certain criteria. For example, the Council could add language to the code that requires all development on NC3-85 zoned parcels in a particular urban village to comply with certain lot coverage or setback requirements. CB 117294, which would implement a recently proposed legislative rezone in the West Seattle Junction Hub Urban Village, includes such specialized code language.</p> <p><b>Considerations:</b> Adding specialized zoning language to the SMC that only applies to specific areas complicates the Land Use Code and can create challenges for DPD’s plan review and code enforcement staff. SMC Chapter 23.47A, which establishes authorized uses and development standards for Commercial and NC zones, is particularly complex. An alternative and potentially simpler location for new specialized code language that applies to portions of the Roosevelt rezone area might be SMC Chapter 23.61, which deals with Station Area Overlay Districts.</p>
<p>4. Remove selected parcels from the legislative rezone area</p>	<p><b>Description:</b> Councilmembers have the authority to amend a legislative rezone proposal by carving out parcels that are proposed for rezoning, thereby maintaining the current zoning applied to those properties.</p> <p><b>Considerations:</b> DPD is currently reviewing a quasi-judicial rezone proposal that applies to the high school blocks. If the Council would prefer to address the zoning of that area as part of a quasi-judicial proceeding, the high school blocks could be removed from the legislative rezone area.</p>

Other options evaluated by Central Staff and not listed here include an Urban Design Framework and an expanded design review process. As neither of those options would have a regulatory impact, neither are recommended by staff at this time.

If Councilmembers would like to review additional information and analysis about how some of the tools described above could be applied in the Roosevelt Residential Urban Village, staff will prepare the necessary materials in advance of COBE’s next discussion on this rezone proposal.

#### **Next Steps**

COBE’s next opportunity to discuss legislative rezone options for Roosevelt will likely be on November 16. If you have questions about any of the issues raised in this memorandum or the attached documents, please feel free to contact me at any time (4-5382 / [sara.belz@seattle.gov](mailto:sara.belz@seattle.gov)).